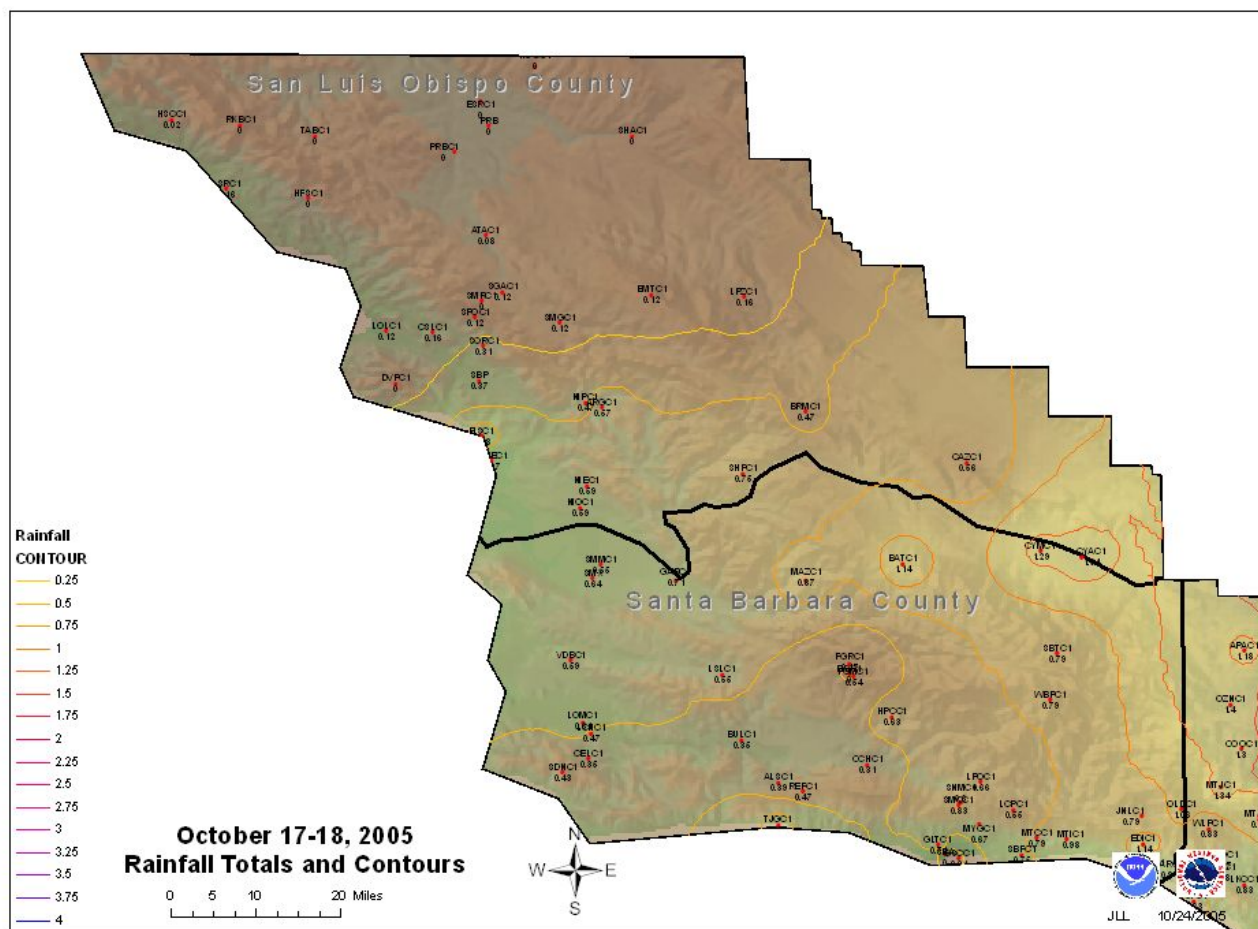
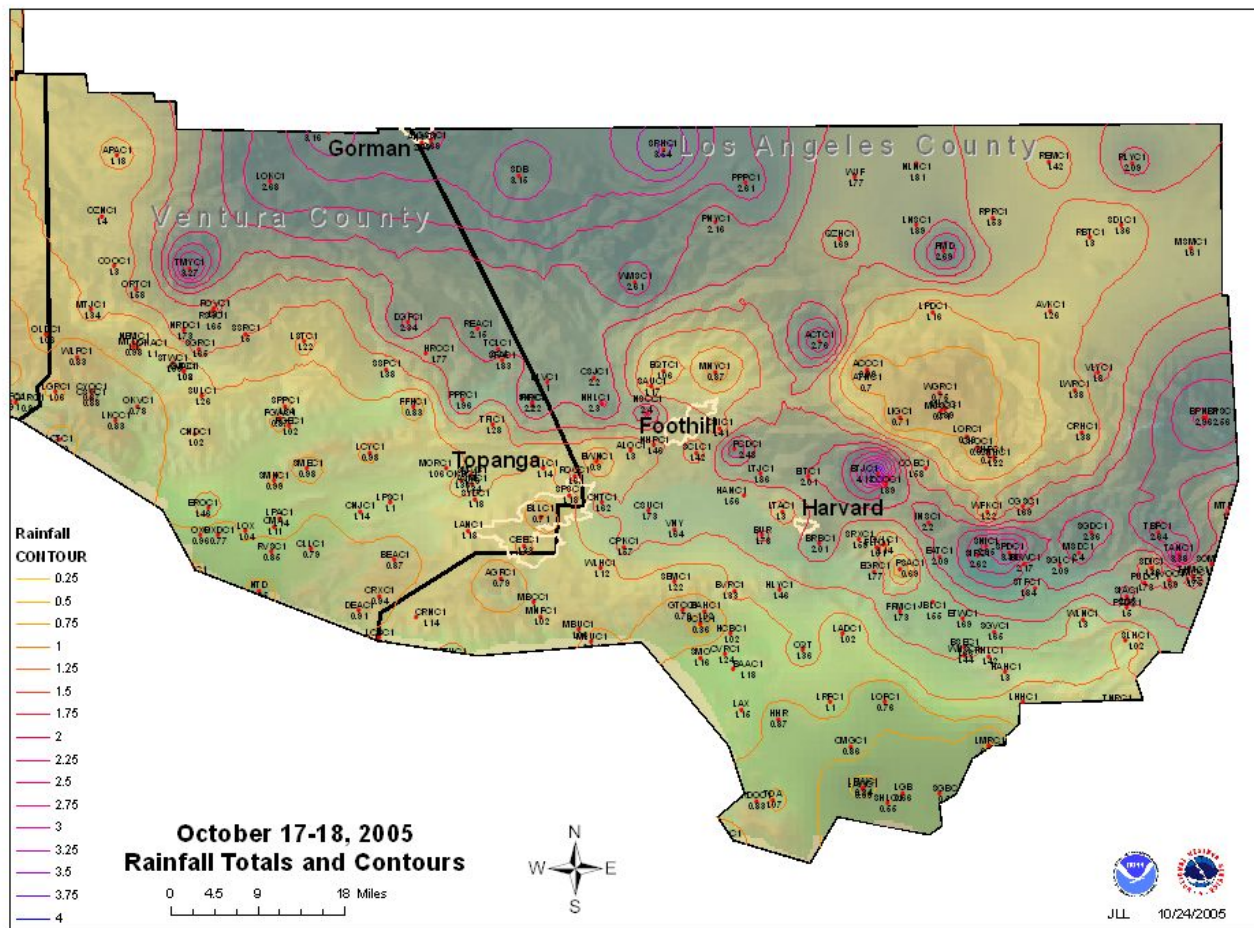


17-18 October 2005
Heavy Rain –Thunderstorms – Debris Flows





Summary

A strong upper level low pressure system moved south over southern California on the 15th and 16th of October before stalling approximately 300 miles southwest of Los Angeles...over the Pacific Ocean. Upper level energy wrapping around the low pressure center was able to tap into the abundant moisture source of the Pacific Ocean and bring showers and thunderstorms with rain...locally heavy at times to southwestern California on the 17th and 18th of October - as the upper level low moved slowly back to the northeast. October 17th was the most active day, with numerous thunderstorms moving northwest across Los Angeles and Ventura counties all day long. The strongest thunderstorms brought hail...gusty winds and high rainfall rates to Los Angeles and Ventura counties. One thunderstorm became severe as it tracked across the San Gabriel Valley and produced hail up to 1 ¼ inches in diameter just northeast of

Pasadena. Storm total rainfall rates were unusually high for this time of year...with maximum 48 hour totals between 4 and 5 inches over the foothills and southern sections of the San Gabriel Mountains of Los Angeles County. In general, between 1 and 3 inches of rain fell across the inland coastal plain and valleys of Ventura and Los Angeles counties. Showers and thunderstorms which clustered over the western Antelope Valley and over the Portal Ridge late in the afternoon on the 17th produced over 2 inches of rain in just a couple of hours. This resulted in some flooding of Highway 138 west of Lancaster. The rainfall tapered off quickly as one moved northwest of Ventura County, with just under 1 inch of rain over southern Santa Barbara County and near one half inch of rain over southern San Luis Obispo County.

Storm Damage

Even though the total rainfall was not really enough to cause much in the way of significant flooding, the high rainfall rates over the recently burned areas around Burbank and near Gorman resulted in quick response debris flows. The debris flow near Burbank flowed quickly down a steep residential road, inundating and moving a couple of automobiles, and leaving a several inch thick layer of mud, rocks and vegetation debris on the road. There was no known damage to homes, but the road remained closed to vehicle traffic for approximately 24 hours. The debris flow that developed near Gorman blocked exit ramps and a couple of lanes on Interstate 5 near Fort Tejon. The interstate was closed in both directions for several hours while CalTrans worked to remove the mud and debris. A mobile home park in Santa Clarita below the Foothill burn area of 2004 once again was the site of a debris flow which temporarily flooded the entrance into the community.

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Special thanks go to Jayme Laber for producing the maps of rainfall totals.